



State of California

LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION

April 5, 2011

Daniel W. Hancock
Chairman

Eugene "Mitch" Mitchell
Vice Chairman

Victoria Bradshaw

Marilyn C. Brewer

Virginia Ellis

Marshall Geller

Alyson Huber
Assemblymember

Loren Kaye

Michael J. Rubio
Senator

David A. Schwarz

Jonathan Shapiro

Mark Wyland
Senator

Stuart Drown
Executive Director

The Honorable Paul Fong
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 5135
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT FOR ASSEMBLY BILL 1116

Dear Assemblymember Fong:

The Little Hoover Commission supports AB 1116, the measure you have authored to improve emergency preparedness, response, and recovery for populations who have limited proficiency in the English language.

In its April 2006 report, *Safeguarding the Golden State: Preparing for Catastrophic Events*, the Commission addressed, among other issues, planning for the needs of vulnerable populations. During the course of its public meeting process, the Commission heard from those who held real concerns that wide-scale emergencies in California would overwhelm the ability of specialty transport companies to evacuate medically fragile or other populations with special needs. Parents were concerned that public agencies be prepared to reunite them with their children in the event a catastrophic event occurs while the children are at school. The large number of languages spoken in California could further complicate efforts to provide services to residents during the chaos of a catastrophe.

The Commission concluded that as part of disaster planning, the state must require that emergency management officials know where vulnerable individuals live and work, and develop plans for ensuring their needs will be met in a catastrophe.

AB 1116 addresses the Commission's recommendations by requiring the California Emergency Management Agency to take measures to help people with limited English proficiency prepare for emergencies and understand information conveyed during emergencies. For these reasons, the Commission will actively support the measure.

As the bill moves through the committee process, I will be writing letters on behalf of the Commission to legislators urging aye votes. If you feel my presence and testimony at a hearing would be helpful, please let me know, and I will make every attempt to be available.

Sincerely,

Stuart Drown
Executive Director

c: Commissioners